THE WORLD'S MOST WAY PAST COOL COMIC!
SONIC
THE HEDGEHOG
Archie
65TH ANNIVERSARY
173
US $2.25
CAN $2.65
SEGA
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
SAAZ

ROUND UP!
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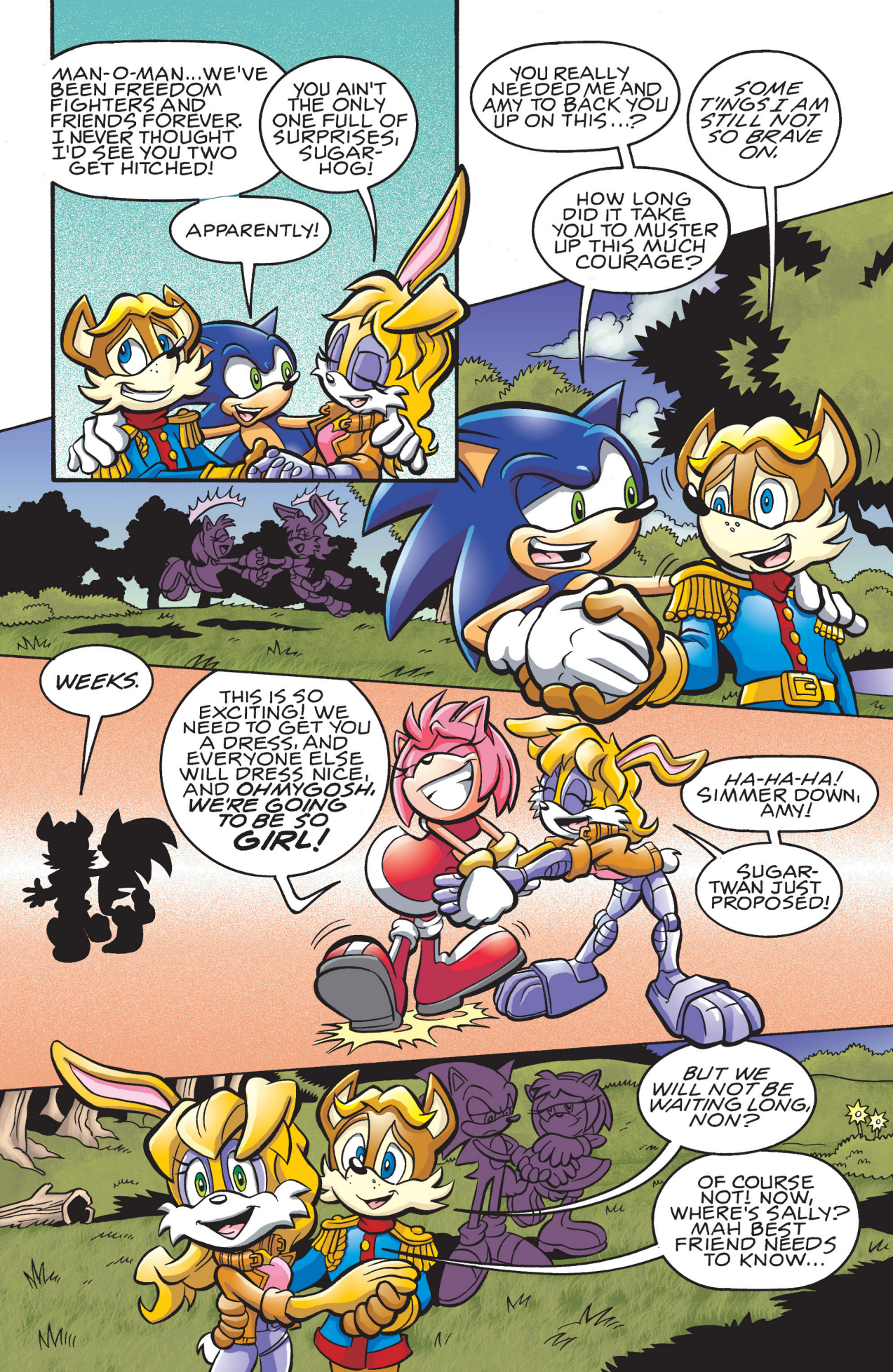
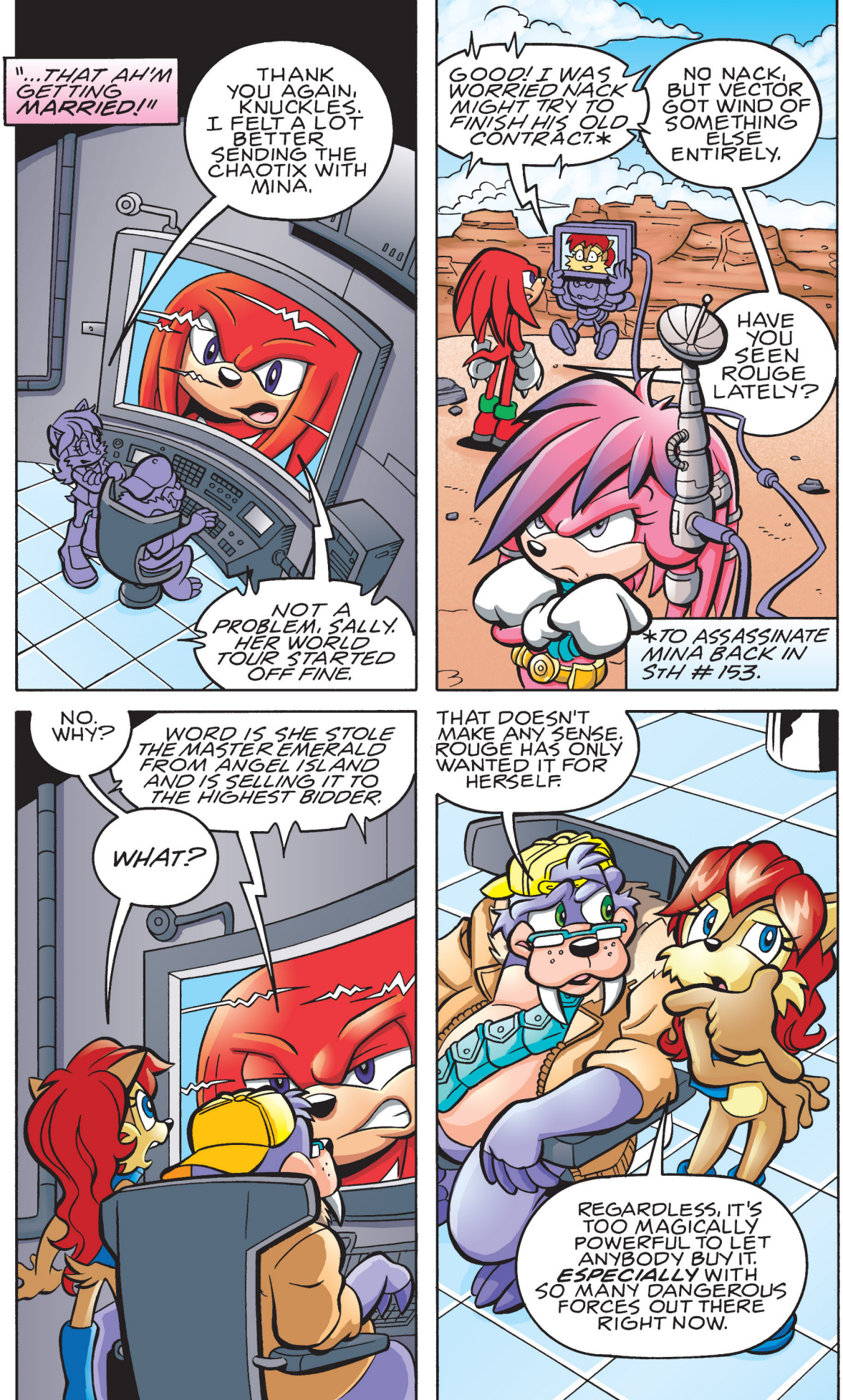
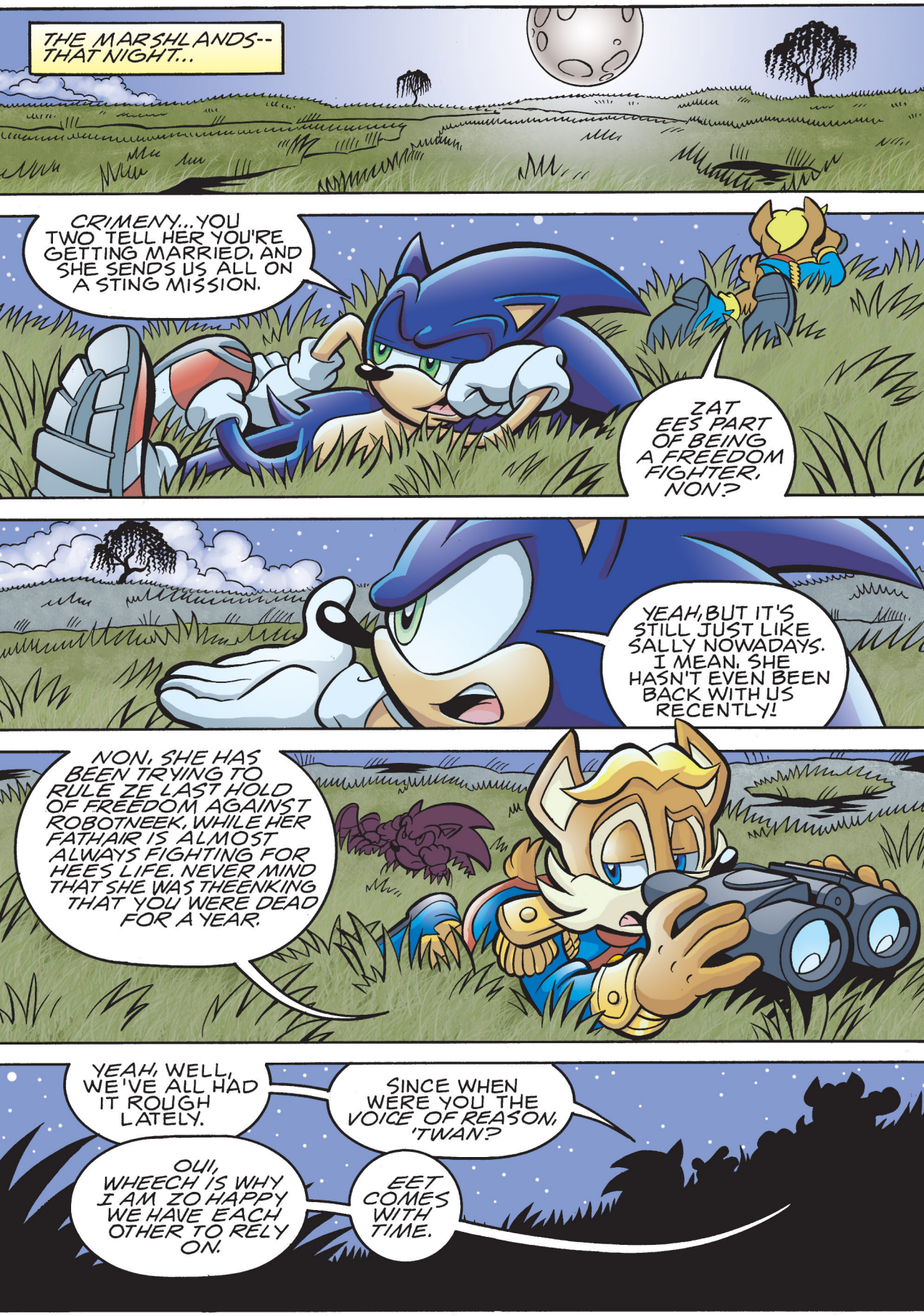
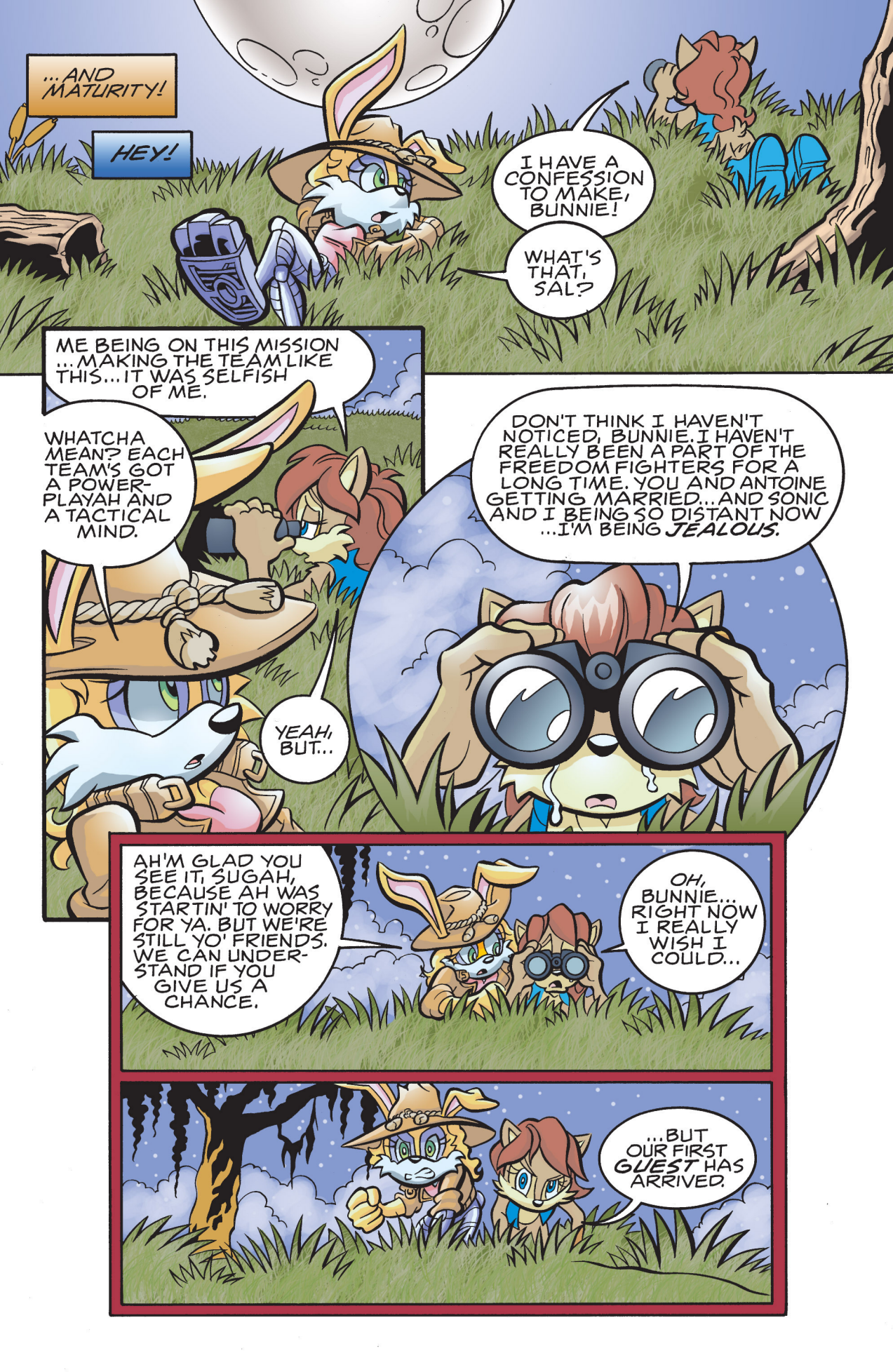
BUNNIE RABBOT, WILL YOU DO ME ZE GREAT HONOR OF BECOMINK MY WIFE?
OH, ANTOINE! AH-AH-AH WILL!
RING GROTTO
WHOA... GO, 'TWAN!
OHMYGOSH!
...DOES THIS GIVE YOU ANY IDEAS, SONIC?
NOT A ONE, AMY.
BUT IT'S A NICE BREAK FROM THE DRAMA OF EARLIER TODAY.*
*SEE LAST ISSUE FOR FIONA'S SHOCKING DEPARTURE.
AMY ROSE
(Would-Be) Love Interest
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
Fastest Thing Alive!
SALLY ACORN
Tomboy Princess
NACK THE WEASEL
Gun For Hire
ANTOINE & BUNNIE
Happy Freedom Fighter Couple
BEAN & BARK
Bombs and Brawn!


MAN-O-MAN...WE'VE BEEN FREEDOM FIGHTERS AND FRIENDS FOREVER. I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE YOU TWO GET HITCHED!
YOU AIN'T THE ONLY ONE FULL OF SURPRISES, SUGAR-HOG!
APPARENTLY!
YOU REALLY NEEDED ME AND AMY TO BACK YOU UP ON THIS...?
SOME T'INGS I AM STILL NOT SO BRAVE ON.
HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO MUSTER UP THIS MUCH COURAGE?
WEEKS.
THIS IS SO EXCITING! WE NEED TO GET YOU A DRESS, AND EVERYONE ELSE WILL DRESS NICE, AND OHMYGOSH, WE'RE GOING TO BE SO GIRL!
HA-HA-HA! SIMMER DOWN, AMY!
SUGAR-TWAN JUST PROPOSED!
BUT WE WILL NOT BE WAITING LONG, NON?
OF COURSE NOT! NOW, WHERE'S SALLY? MAH BEST FRIEND NEEDS TO KNOW...

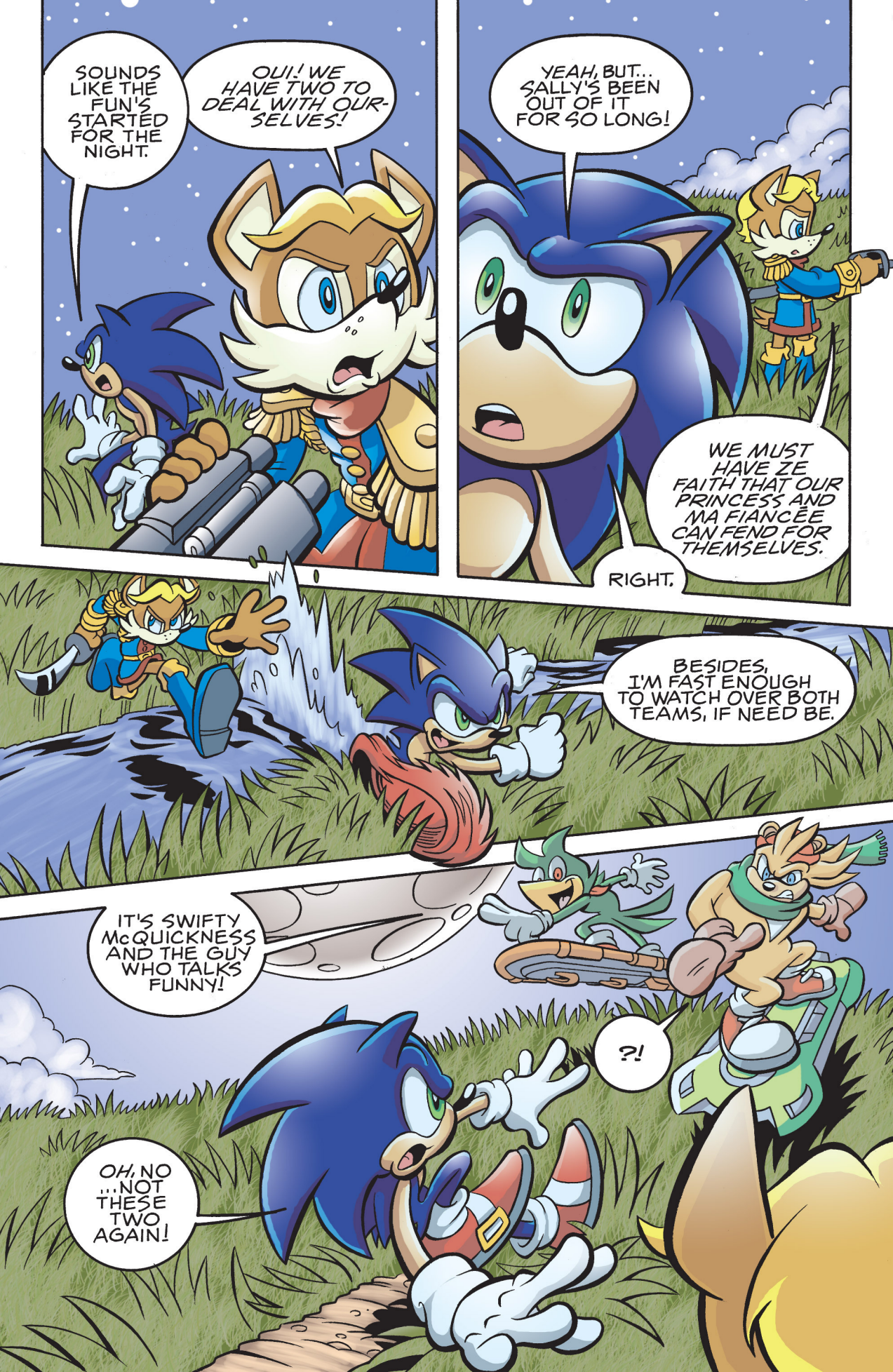

"...THAT AH'M GETTING MARRIED!"
THANK YOU AGAIN, KNUCKLES. I FELT A LOT BETTER SENDING THE CHAOTIX WITH MINA.
NOT A PROBLEM, SALLY. HER WORLD TOUR STARTED OFF FINE.
GOOD! I WAS WORRIED NACK MIGHT TRY TO FINISH HIS OLD CONTRACT.*
NO NACK, BUT VECTOR GOT WIND OF SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY.
HAVE YOU SEEN ROUGE LATELY?
*TO ASSASSINATE MINA BACK IN STH # 153.
NO. WHY?
WORD IS SHE STOLE THE MASTER EMERALD FROM ANGEL ISLAND AND IS SELLING IT TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER.
WHAT?
THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE. ROUGE HAS ONLY WANTED IT FOR HERSELF.
REGARDLESS, IT'S TOO MAGICALLY POWERFUL TO LET ANYBODY BUY IT. ESPECIALLY WITH SO MANY DANGEROUS FORCES OUT THERE RIGHT NOW.

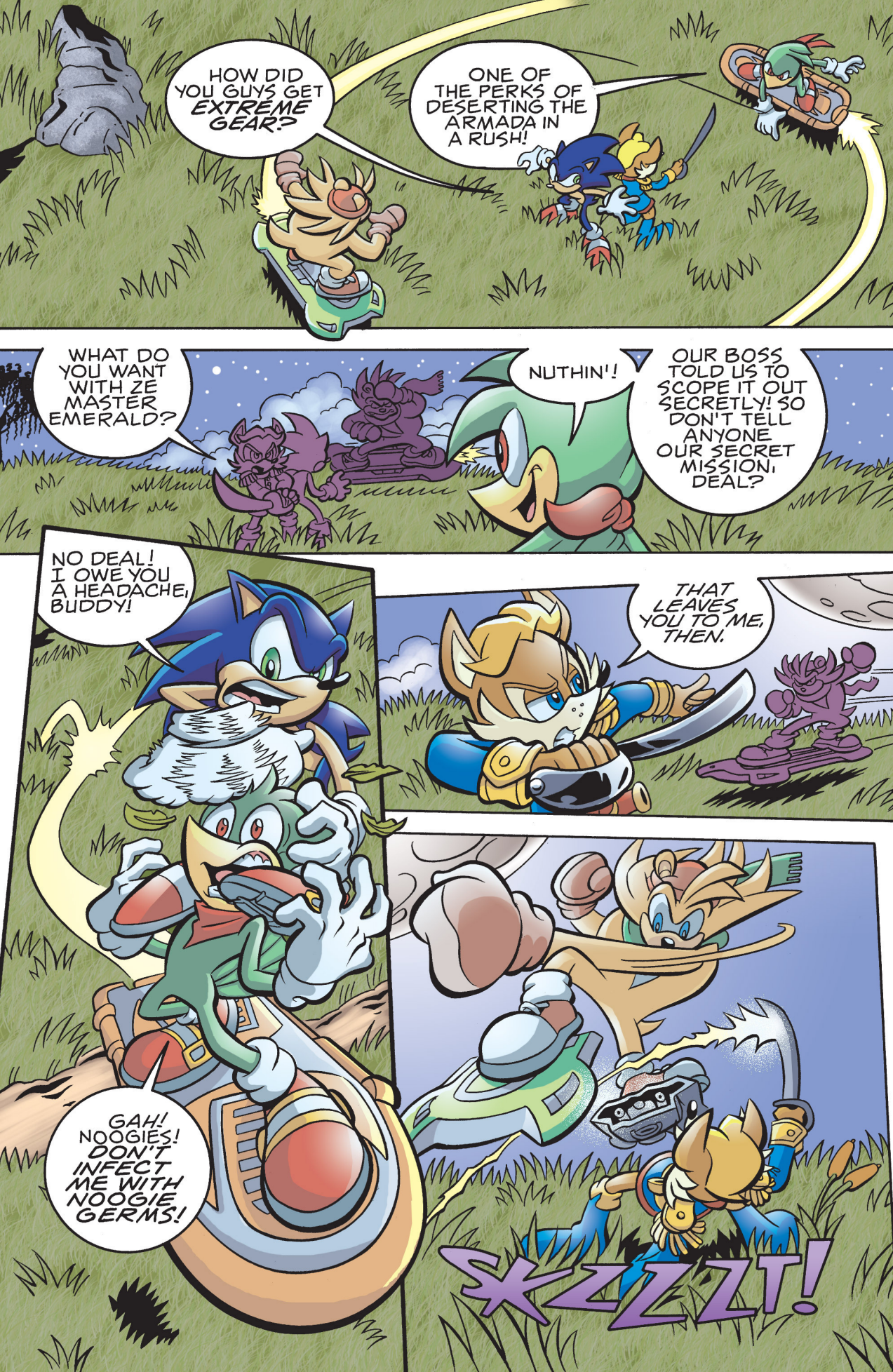
HAS LOCKE CONTACTED YOU ABOUT THIS?
NO, DAD AND I... WE AREN'T ON SPEAKING TERMS RIGHT NOW.
*THE SPAT WAS BACK IN STH #165.
THE CHAOTIX WILL MAKE SURE THE NEXT LEG OF MINA'S TOUR GOES ON FINE. I--VECTOR, STOP LAUGHING AT JULIE-SU-- I'LL BE BACK TO KNOTHOLE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!
HOLD ON THERE, KNUX. DO YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ROUGE?
I GOT A ROUGH LOCATION, YES.
THEN YOU STAY WITH THE CHAOTIX.
THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS OWE YOU THIS ONE.

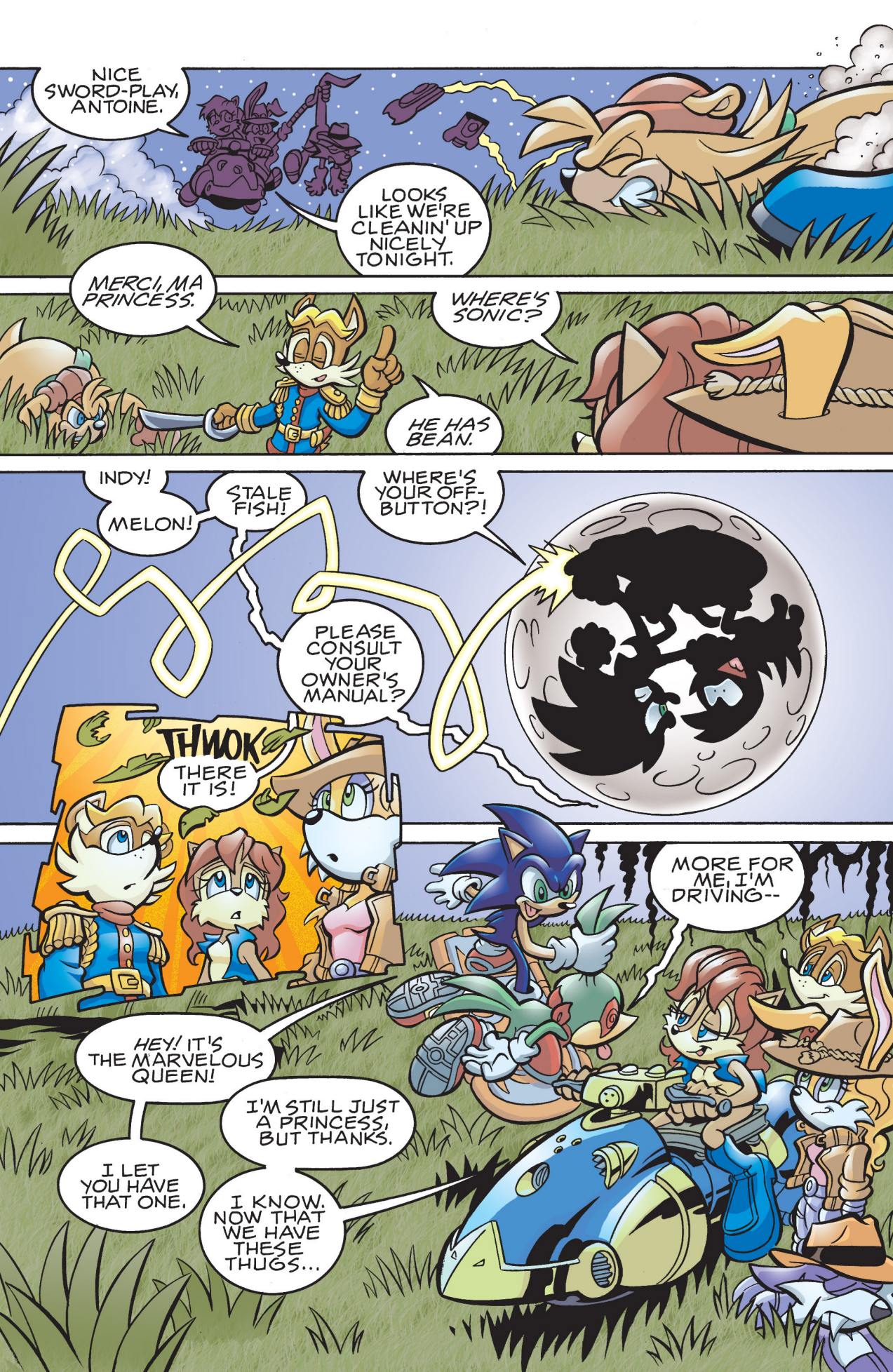

THE MARSHLANDS--
THAT NIGHT...
CRIMENY...YOU TWO TELL HER YOU'RE GETTING MARRIED, AND SHE SENDS US ALL ON A STING MISSION.
ZAT EES PART OF BEING A FREEDOM FIGHTER, NON?
YEAH, BUT IT'S STILL JUST LIKE SALLY NOWADAYS. I MEAN, SHE HASN'T EVEN BEEN BACK WITH US RECENTLY!
NON, SHE HAS BEEN TRYING TO RULE ZE LAST HOLD OF FREEDOM AGAINST ROBOTNEEK, WHILE HER FATHAIR IS ALMOST ALWAYS FIGHTING FOR HEES LIFE. NEVER MIND THAT SHE WAS THEENKING THAT YOU WERE DEAD FOR A YEAR.
YEAH, WELL, WE'VE ALL HAD IT ROUGH LATELY.
SINCE WHEN WERE YOU THE VOICE OF REASON, 'TWAN?
OUI, WHEECH IS WHY I AM ZO HAPPY WE HAVE EACH OTHER TO RELY ON.
EET COMES WITH TIME.


...AND MATURITY!
HEY!
I HAVE A CONFESSION TO MAKE, BUNNIE!
WHAT'S THAT, SAL?
ME BEING ON THIS MISSION ...MAKING THE TEAM LIKE THIS... IT WAS SELFISH OF ME.
WHATCHA MEAN? EACH TEAM'S GOT A POWER-PLAYAH AND A TACTICAL MIND.
YEAH, BUT...
DON'T THINK I HAVEN'T NOTICED, BUNNIE. I HAVEN'T REALLY BEEN A PART OF THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS FOR A LONG TIME. YOU AND ANTOINE GETTING MARRIED... AND SONIC AND I BEING SO DISTANT NOW ...I'M BEING JEALOUS.
AH'M GLAD YOU SEE IT, SUGAH, BECAUSE AH WAS STARTIN' TO WORRY FOR YA. BUT WE'RE STILL YO' FRIENDS. WE CAN UNDER-STAND IF YOU GIVE US A CHANCE.
OH, BUNNIE... RIGHT NOW I REALLY WISH I COULD...
...BUT OUR FIRST GUEST HAS ARRIVED.

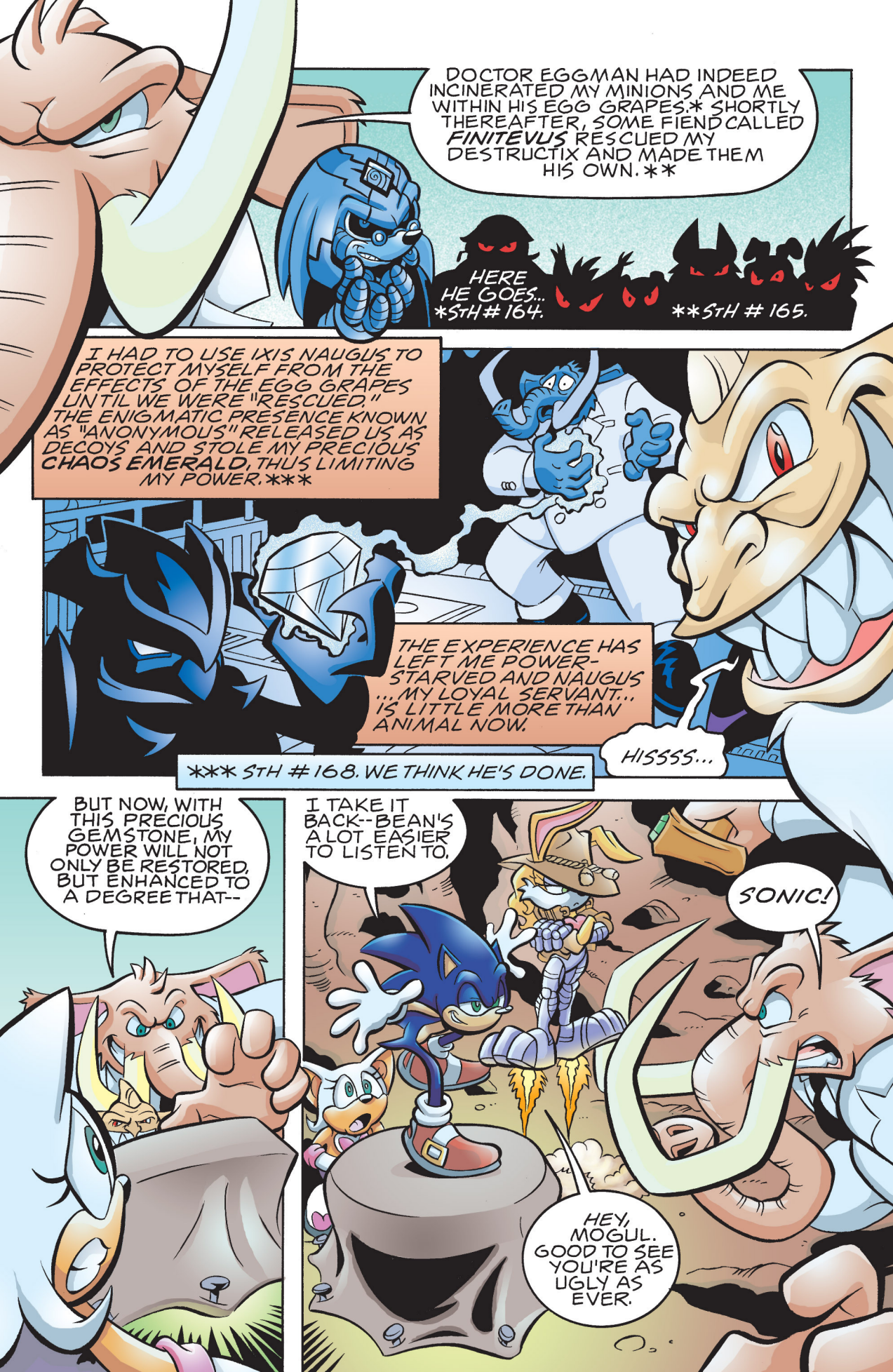
THAT'S FAR ENOUGH, NACK. COME ALONG QUIETLY, AND MAYBE WE CAN FORGET THE CHARGE OF ESCAPING PRISON.
PRINCESS SALLY...
I WAS JUST HIRED FOR RECONNAISSANCE TONIGHT. BUT I'VE BEEN HOPING TO REPAY YOU FOR THAT "LOVE TAP" A WHILE BACK.*
I DON'T THINK HE'S GOING TO COME QUIETLY, BUNNIE.
*WHILE SALLY WAS KIDNAPPED IN STH # 123.
HE'LL COME QUIETLY ENOUGH!
NOT TONIGHT, TOOTS!
BLAM!

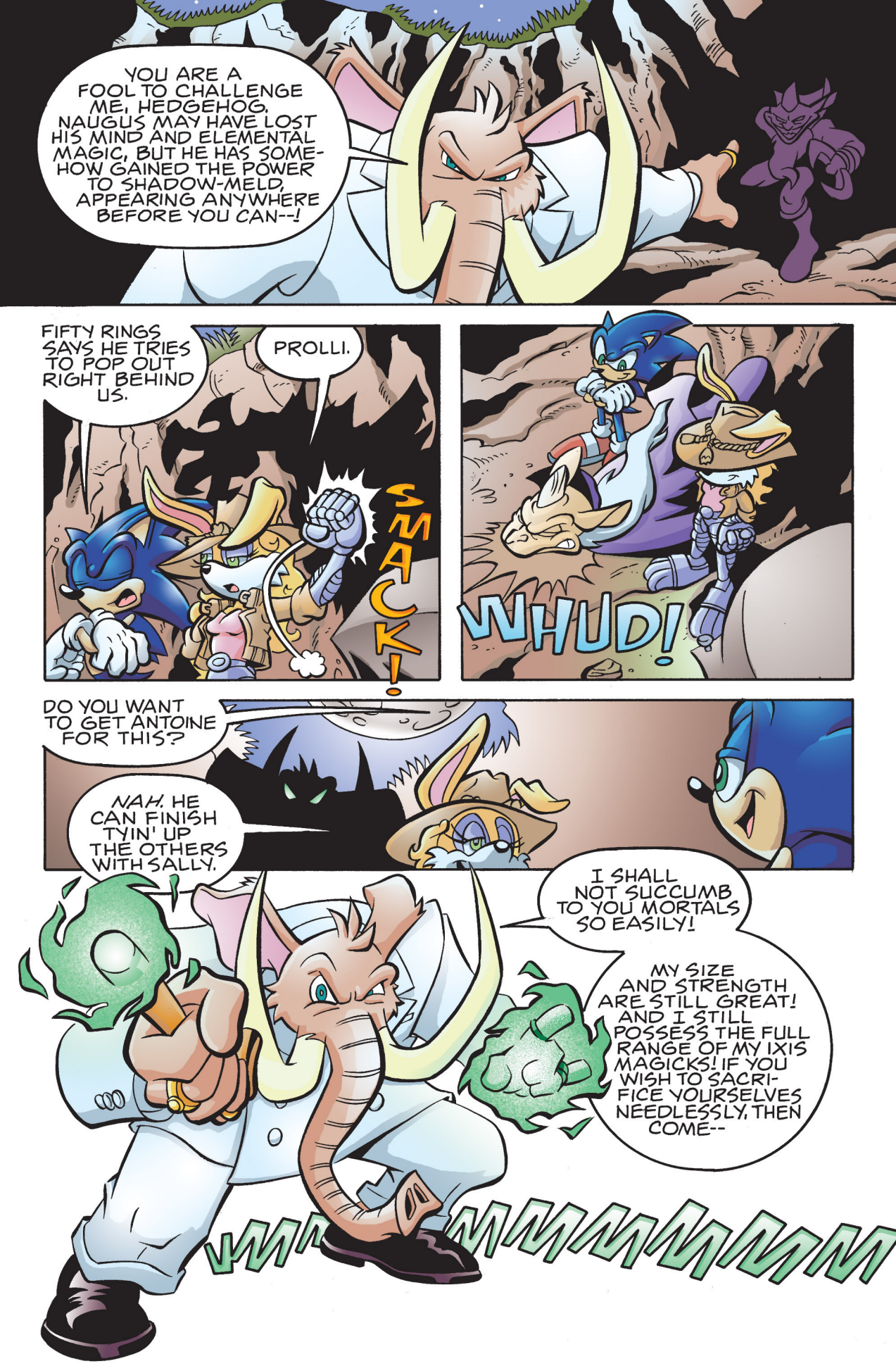

SOUNDS LIKE THE FUN'S STARTED FOR THE NIGHT.
OUI! WE HAVE TWO TO DEAL WITH OURSELVES!
YEAH, BUT... SALLY'S BEEN OUT OF IT FOR SO LONG!
WE MUST HAVE ZE FAITH THAT OUR PRINCESS AND MA FIANCÉE CAN FEND FOR THEMSELVES.
RIGHT.
BESIDES, I'M FAST ENOUGH TO WATCH OVER BOTH TEAMS, IF NEED BE.
IT'S SWIFTY McQUICKNESS AND THE GUY WHO TALKS FUNNY!
?!
OH, NO ...NOT THESE TWO AGAIN!


HOW DID YOU GUYS GET EXTREME GEAR?
ONE OF THE PERKS OF DESERTING THE ARMADA IN A RUSH!
WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ZE MASTER EMERALD?
NUTHIN'!
OUR BOSS TOLD US TO SCOPE IT OUT SECRETLY! SO DON'T TELL ANYONE OUR SECRET MISSION, DEAL?
NO DEAL! I OWE YOU A HEADACHE, BUDDY!
THAT LEAVES YOU TO ME, THEN.
GAH! NOOGIES! DON'T INFECT ME WITH NOOGIE GERMS!
ZZZT!

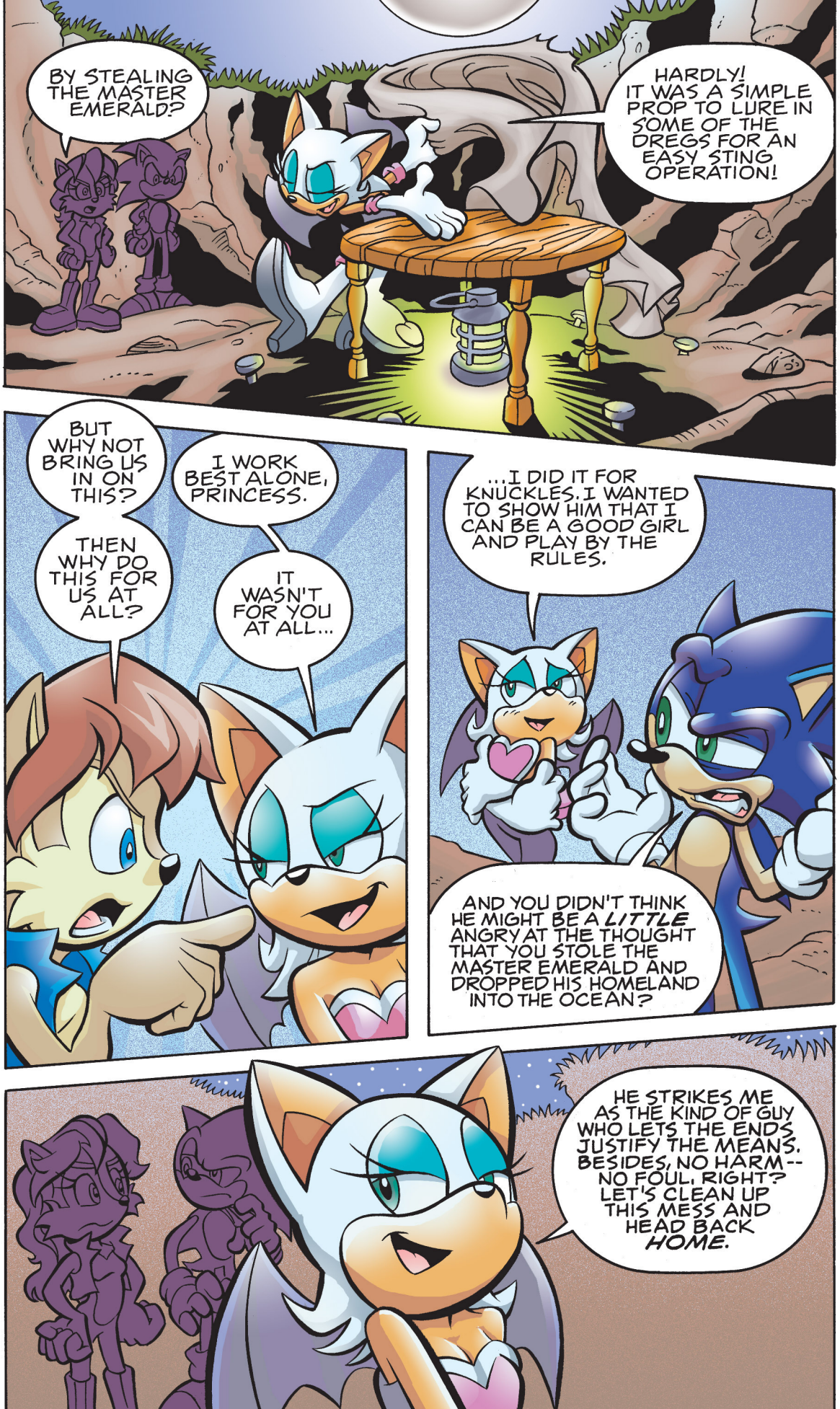

NICE SWORD-PLAY, ANTOINE.
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE CLEANIN' UP NICELY TONIGHT.
MERCI, MA PRINCESS.
WHERE'S SONIC?
HE HAS BEAN.
INDY!
MELON!
STALE FISH!
WHERE'S YOUR OFF-BUTTON?!
PLEASE CONSULT YOUR OWNER'S MANUAL?
THWOK
THERE IT IS!
MORE FOR ME, I'M DRIVING--
HEY! IT'S THE MARVELOUS QUEEN!
I'M STILL JUST A PRINCESS, BUT THANKS.
I LET YOU HAVE THAT ONE.
I KNOW. NOW THAT WE HAVE THESE THUGS...

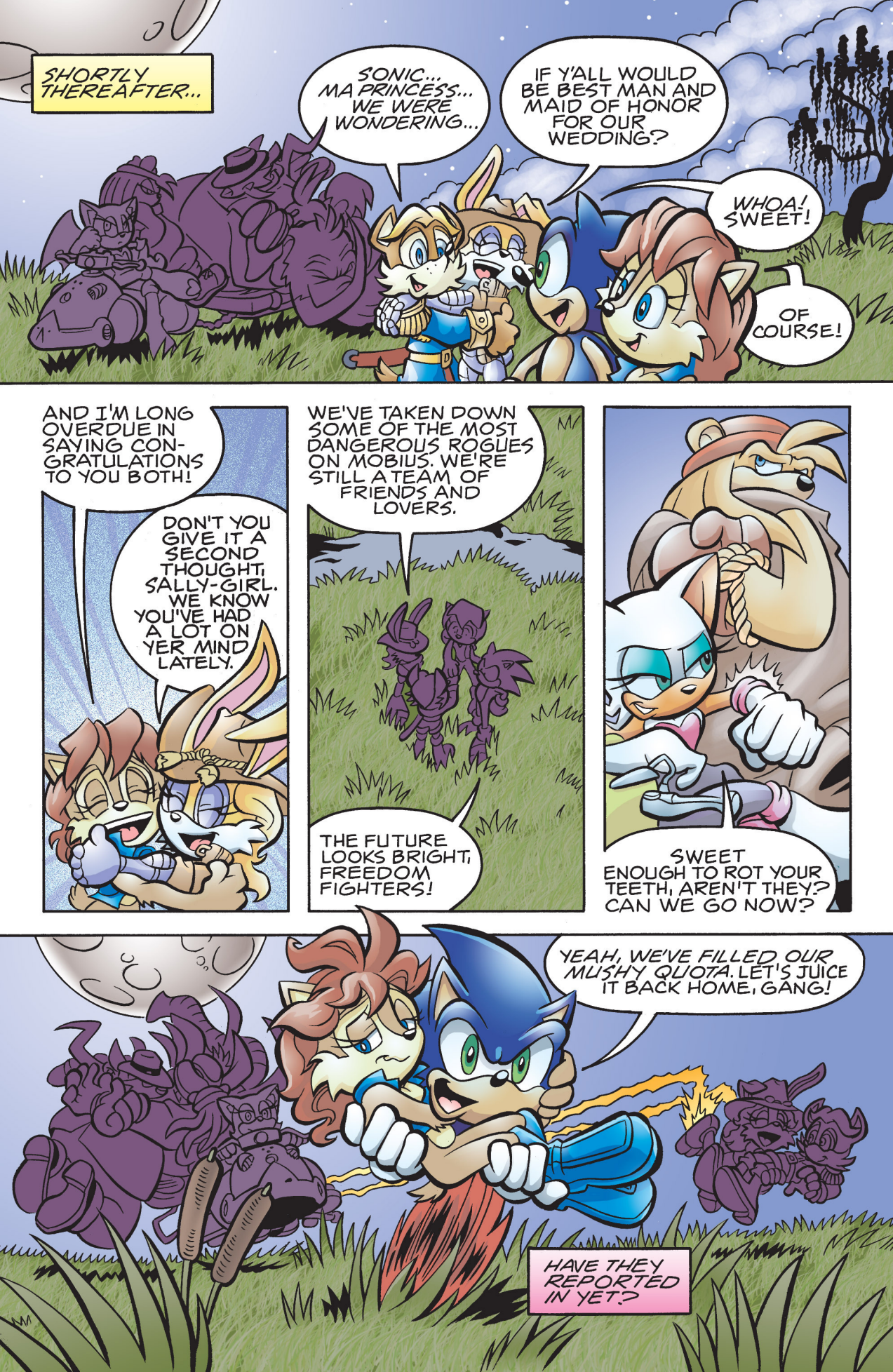
LET'S GO CONFRONT ROUGE.
JEEZ... I OFFER UP THE "MASTER EMERALD" AND THERE ARE NO TAKERS. WHAT DOES A GIRL HAVE TO DO TO GET SOME ATTENTION THESE DAYS?
REST ASSURED, MADAM...
...YOU AND YOUR GENEROUS OFFER HAVE GONE FAR FROM UNNOTICED.
HISSSSS...
M-MAMMOTH MOGUL! I--I WASN'T EXPECTING SOMEBODY LIKE YOU! I MEAN-- I THOUGHT YOU WERE--
IMPRISONED? FOR A TIME, I WAS...

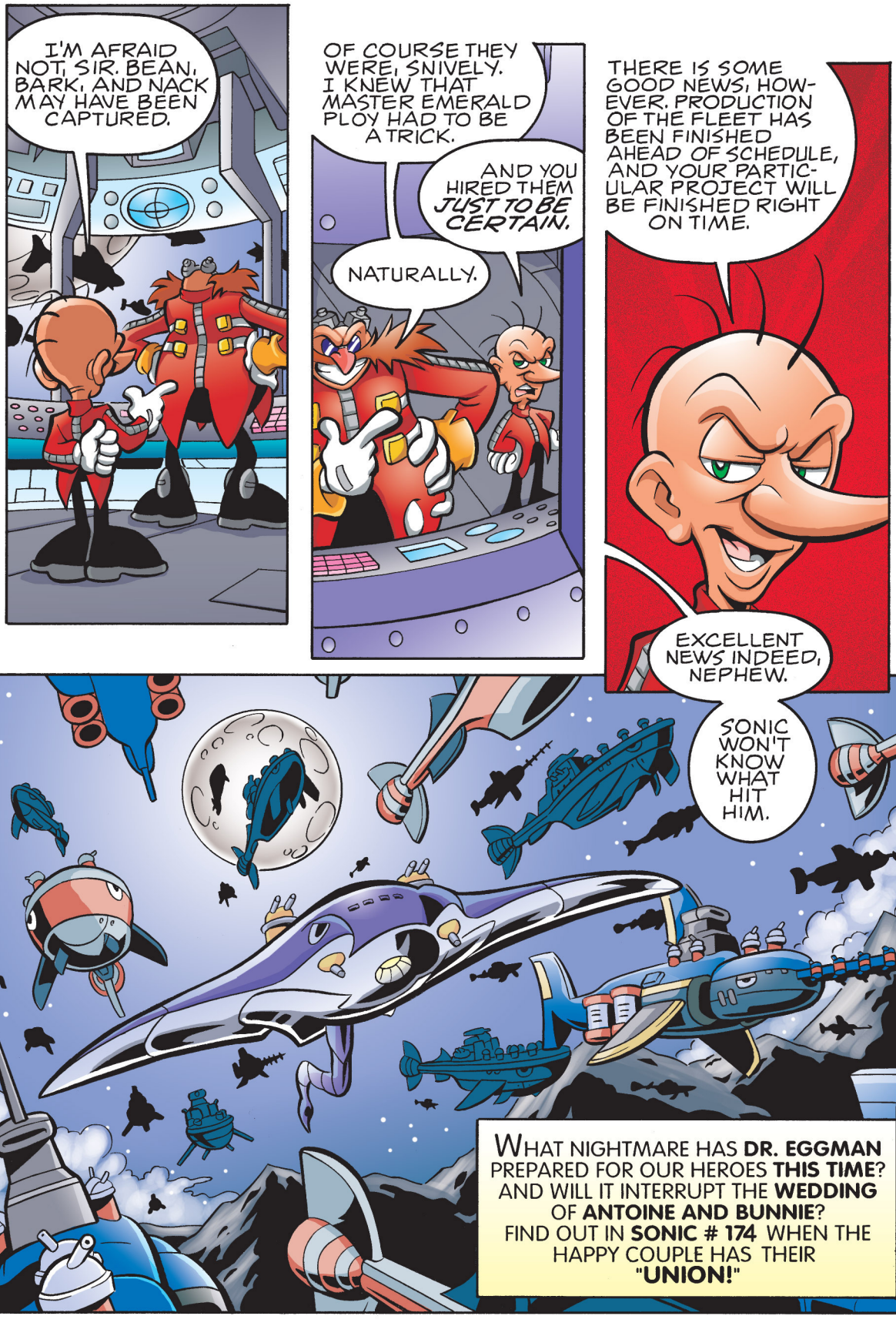

DOCTOR EGGMAN HAD INDEED INCINERATED MY MINIONS AND ME WITHIN HIS EGG GRAPES.* SHORTLY THEREAFTER, SOME FIEND CALLED FINITEVUS RESCUED MY DESTRUCTIX AND MADE THEM HIS OWN.**
HERE HE GOES... *STH # 164.
**STH # 165.
I HAD TO USE IXIS NAUGUS TO PROTECT MYSELF FROM THE EFFECTS OF THE EGG GRAPES UNTIL WE WERE "RESCUED." THE ENIGMATIC PRESENCE KNOWN AS "ANONYMOUS" RELEASED US AS DECOYS AND STOLE MY PRECIOUS CHAOS EMERALD, THUS LIMITING MY POWER.***
THE EXPERIENCE HAS LEFT ME POWER-STARVED AND NAUGUS ...MY LOYAL SERVANT... IS LITTLE MORE THAN ANIMAL NOW.
HISSSS...
*** STH # 168. WE THINK HE'S DONE.
BUT NOW, WITH THIS PRECIOUS GEMSTONE, MY POWER WILL NOT ONLY BE RESTORED, BUT ENHANCED TO A DEGREE THAT--
I TAKE IT BACK--BEAN'S A LOT EASIER TO LISTEN TO.
SONIC!
HEY, MOGUL. GOOD TO SEE YOU'RE AS UGLY AS EVER.


YOU ARE A FOOL TO CHALLENGE ME, HEDGEHOG. NAUGUS MAY HAVE LOST HIS MIND AND ELEMENTAL MAGIC, BUT HE HAS SOMEHOW GAINED THE POWER TO SHADOW-MELD, APPEARING ANYWHERE BEFORE YOU CAN--!
FIFTY RINGS SAYS HE TRIES TO POP OUT RIGHT BEHIND US.
PROLLI.
SMACK!
WHUD!
DO YOU WANT TO GET ANTOINE FOR THIS?
NAH. HE CAN FINISH TYIN' UP THE OTHERS WITH SALLY.
I SHALL NOT SUCCUMB TO YOU MORTALS SO EASILY!
MY SIZE AND STRENGTH ARE STILL GREAT! AND I STILL POSSESS THE FULL RANGE OF MY IXIS MAGICKS! IF YOU WISH TO SACRIFICE YOURSELVES NEEDLESSLY, THEN COME--

VRROOOM
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT!
WHAM!
NOW THAT IS AN ENTRANCE.
I'D GIVE IT A TEN.
THANK YOU, THANK YOU. BUNNIE, LET ANTOINE KNOW WE'LL NEED MORE ROPE.
HA-HA-HA! WILL DO, SALLY!
FIVE DOWN...
...ONE TO GO.
WHAT? NOW, HOLD ON. I'M ON YOUR SIDE IN ALL THIS.


BY STEALING THE MASTER EMERALD?
HARDLY! IT WAS A SIMPLE PROP TO LURE IN SOME OF THE DREGS FOR AN EASY STING OPERATION!
BUT WHY NOT BRING US IN ON THIS?
I WORK BEST ALONE, PRINCESS.
THEN WHY DO THIS FOR US AT ALL?
IT WASN'T FOR YOU AT ALL...
...I DID IT FOR KNUCKLES. I WANTED TO SHOW HIM THAT I CAN BE A GOOD GIRL AND PLAY BY THE RULES.
AND YOU DIDN'T THINK HE MIGHT BE A *LITTLE* ANGRY AT THE THOUGHT THAT YOU STOLE THE MASTER EMERALD AND DROPPED HIS HOMELAND INTO THE OCEAN?
HE STRIKES ME AS THE KIND OF GUY WHO LETS THE ENDS JUSTIFY THE MEANS. BESIDES, NO HARM-- NO FOUL, RIGHT? LET'S CLEAN UP THIS MESS AND HEAD BACK *HOME*.


SHORTLY THEREAFTER...
SONIC... MA PRINCESS... WE WERE WONDERING...
IF Y'ALL WOULD BE BEST MAN AND MAID OF HONOR FOR OUR WEDDING?
WHOA! SWEET!
OF COURSE!
AND I'M LONG OVERDUE IN SAYING CON-GRATULATIONS TO YOU BOTH!
DON'T YOU GIVE IT A SECOND THOUGHT, SALLY-GIRL. WE KNOW YOU'VE HAD A LOT ON YER MIND LATELY.
WE'VE TAKEN DOWN SOME OF THE MOST DANGEROUS ROGUES ON MOBIUS. WE'RE STILL A TEAM OF FRIENDS AND LOVERS.
THE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT, FREEDOM FIGHTERS!
SWEET ENOUGH TO ROT YOUR TEETH, AREN'T THEY? CAN WE GO NOW?
YEAH, WE'VE FILLED OUR MUSHY QUOTA. LET'S JUICE IT BACK HOME, GANG!
HAVE THEY REPORTED IN YET?


I'M AFRAID NOT, SIR. BEAN, BARK, AND NACK MAY HAVE BEEN CAPTURED.
OF COURSE THEY WERE, SNIVELY. I KNEW THAT MASTER EMERALD PLOY HAD TO BE A TRICK.
AND YOU HIRED THEM JUST TO BE CERTAIN.
NATURALLY.
THERE IS SOME GOOD NEWS, HOWEVER. PRODUCTION OF THE FLEET HAS BEEN FINISHED AHEAD OF SCHEDULE, AND YOUR PARTICULAR PROJECT WILL BE FINISHED RIGHT ON TIME.
EXCELLENT NEWS INDEED, NEPHEW.
SONIC WON'T KNOW WHAT HIT HIM.
WHAT NIGHTMARE HAS DR. EGGMAN PREPARED FOR OUR HEROES THIS TIME? AND WILL IT INTERRUPT THE WEDDING OF ANTOINE AND BUNNIE? FIND OUT IN SONIC # 174 WHEN THE HAPPY COUPLE HAS THEIR "UNION!"

SEE YA' LATER CHAO!

PART ONE

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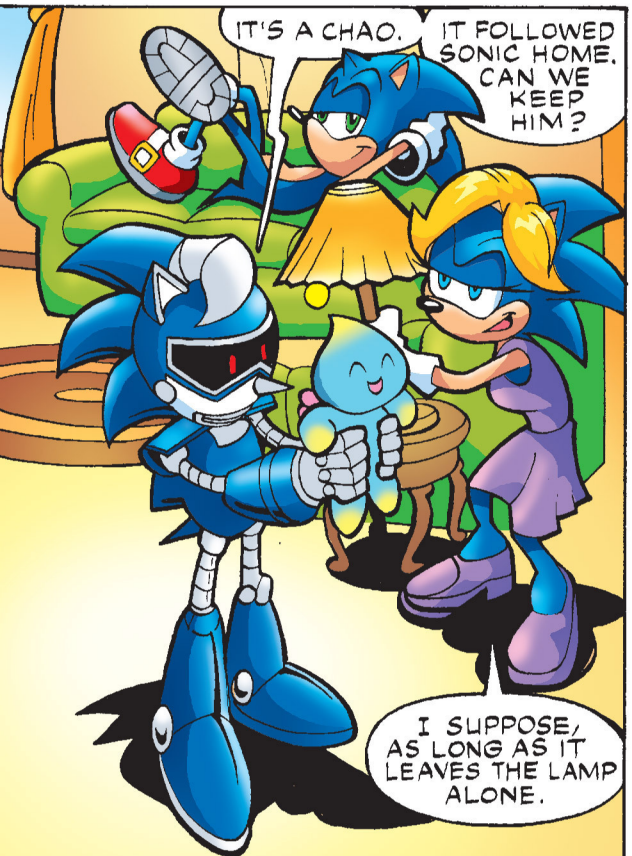
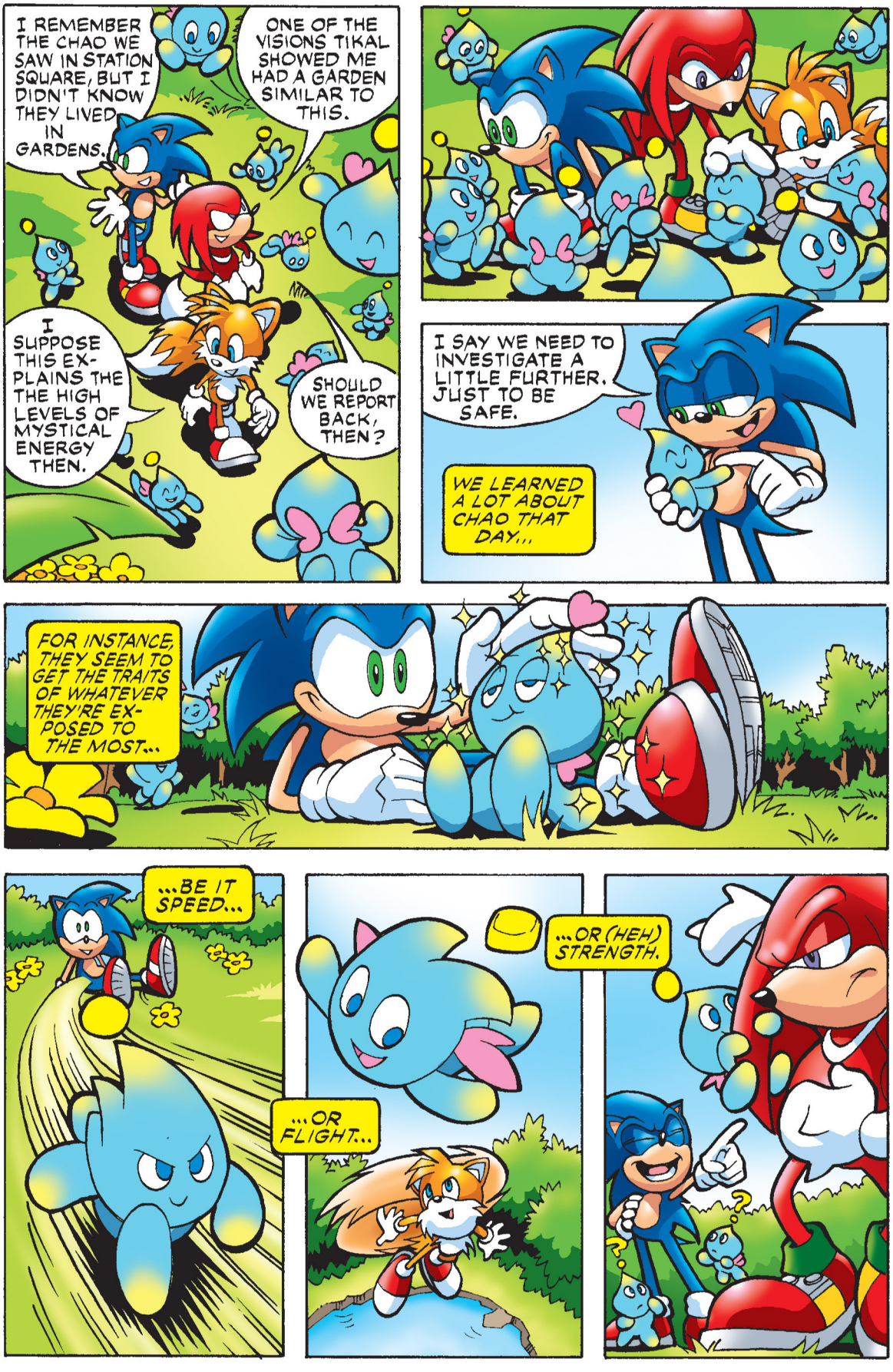
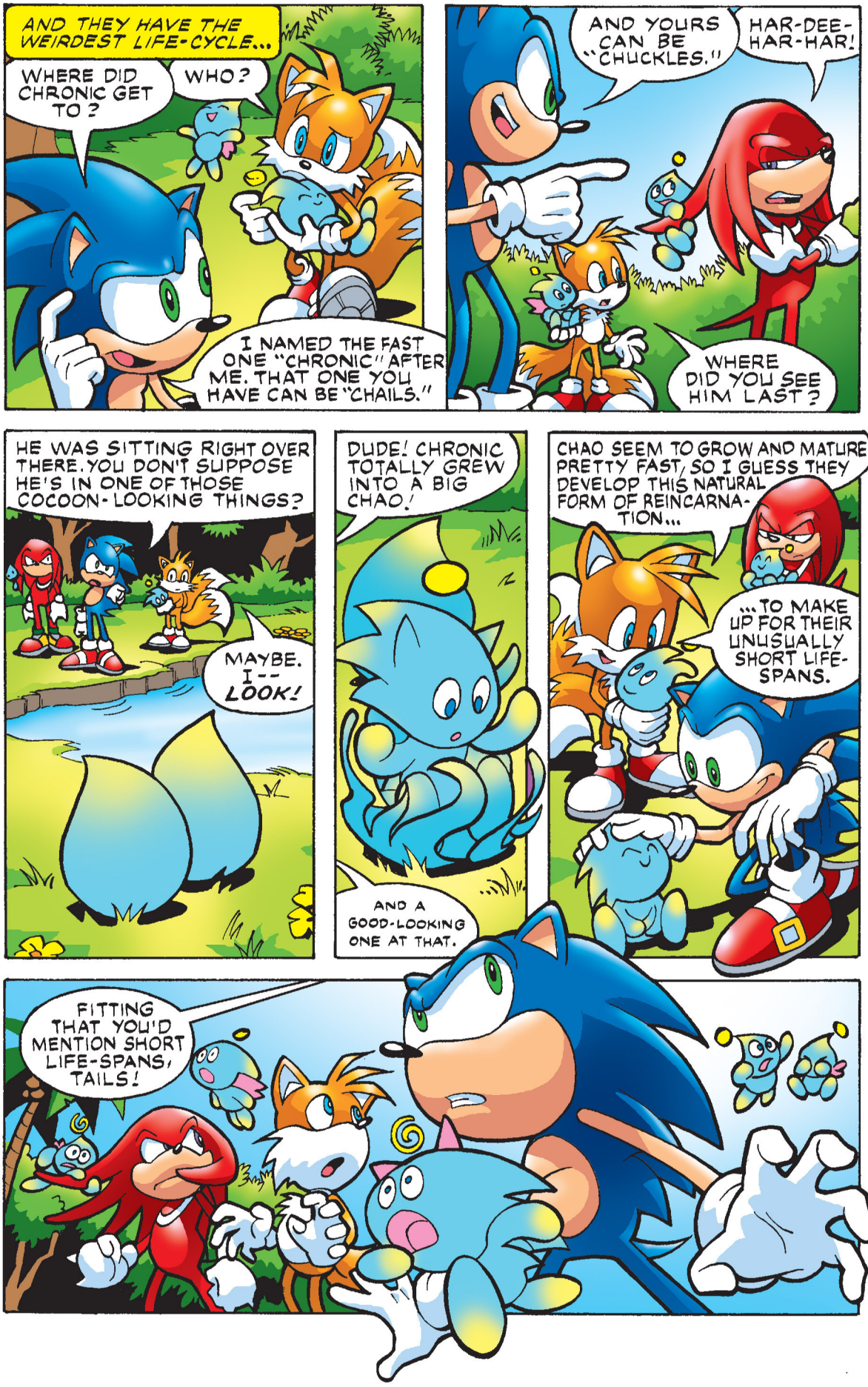


IT DOES BEG THE QUESTION OF "WHAT IS A CHAO?" AND "HOW DID IT FOLLOW A CERTAIN HEDGEHOG HOME?" THOUGH.
I THINK CAN EXPLAIN ALL THAT, MOM.
I WOULD HOPE SO, KIDDO.

THE OTHER DAY, ROTOR PICKED UP READINGS OF MYSTICAL ENERGY AROUND WHERE THE OLD MAGIC RING GROTTO USED TO BE...
... WHICH WAS WEIRD SINCE THAT THING HAD BEEN SUCKED DRY BY EGGMAN.
SINCE THE THREE OF US HAD DEALT WITH THAT AREA BEFORE, ME, TAILS AND KNUCKLES WENT TO CHECK IT OUT.
TRY NOT TO GET INTO A FIGHT THIS TIME, OKAY GUYS?
SURE THING. WOULDN'T WANT TO HAVE TO ROUGH UP KNUCKLES AGAIN.
GUYS!
YOU ROUGH ME UP, LITTLE BOY BLUE?
I GUESS WE WERE EXPECTING SOME MAGIC RINGS OR A CHAOS EMERALD. INSTEAD, WHAT WE GOT WAS...
WHOA...!
A CHAO GARDEN!


I REMEMBER THE CHAO WE SAW IN STATION SQUARE, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW THEY LIVED IN GARDENS.
ONE OF THE VISIONS TIKAL SHOWED ME HAD A GARDEN SIMILAR TO THIS.
I SUPPOSE THIS EXPLAINS THE THE HIGH LEVELS OF MYSTICAL ENERGY THEN.
SHOULD WE REPORT BACK, THEN?
I SAY WE NEED TO INVESTIGATE A LITTLE FURTHER. JUST TO BE SAFE.
WE LEARNED A LOT ABOUT CHAO THAT DAY...
FOR INSTANCE, THEY SEEM TO GET THE TRAITS OF WHATEVER THEY'RE EXPOSED TO THE MOST...
...BE IT SPEED...
...OR FLIGHT...
...OR (HEH) STRENGTH.


AND THEY HAVE THE WEIRDEST LIFE-CYCLE...
WHERE DID CHRONIC GET TO?
WHO?
I NAMED THE FAST ONE "CHRONIC" AFTER ME. THAT ONE YOU HAVE CAN BE "CHAILS."
AND YOURS CAN BE "CHUCKLES."
HAR-DEE-HAR-HAR!
WHERE DID YOU SEE HIM LAST?
HE WAS SITTING RIGHT OVER THERE. YOU DON'T SUPPOSE HE'S IN ONE OF THOSE COCOON-LOOKING THINGS?
MAYBE. I-- LOOK!
DUDE! CHRONIC TOTALLY GREW INTO A BIG CHAO!
AND A GOOD-LOOKING ONE AT THAT.
CHAO SEEM TO GROW AND MATURE PRETTY FAST, SO I GUESS THEY DEVELOP THIS NATURAL FORM OF REINCARNA-TION...
...TO MAKE UP FOR THEIR UNUSUALLY SHORT LIFE-SPANS.
FITTING THAT YOU'D MENTION SHORT LIFE-SPANS, TAILS!

THE CONCLUSION IN SONIC THE HEDGEHOG # 174 ON SALE APRIL!
PLUS, SONIC X #18 & SONIC ARCHIVES VOLUMES 1 & 2 ON SALE NOW!

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